



New report: Amtrak's shipping program faces security, operational weaknesses

For Immediate Release

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WASHINGTON – Security weaknesses in an Amtrak shipping program put employees, passengers, and the company's brand at risk, and operational inefficiencies contribute to train delays among other impacts, according to an Amtrak Office of Inspector General report released Thursday.

The issues were identified during an OIG audit of Amtrak Express, a program by which individuals can pay to ship packages and pallets on Amtrak trains between more than 100 locations. A section of the report related to security was summarized due to the sensitive nature of the OIG's findings, the report said.

Operational weaknesses identified in the report include Amtrak's reliance on a decentralized, paper-based, manual process used for the nationwide shipping program. This process causes problems that contribute to train delays.

For example, company employees cited delays caused when pallets or large volumes of packages arrived at stations that did not have the necessary equipment to unload them efficiently. The report noted that such operational inefficiencies contributed to 109 delays of 5 minutes or longer from April through September 2019.

Other operational impacts resulting from Amtrak's reliance on its current process included the inability to confirm the accuracy of cash transactions and the inability to collect and analyze program data to inform business decisions.

The OIG recommended the company implement security controls to mitigate risk and improve paper-based, manual processes and invest in electronic tools to reduce operational inefficiencies that contribute to train delays and have other impacts.

More details are available in the full report, located on the OIG's website:

<https://go.usa.gov/xdgcn>.

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